

Special Education Directors Have Asked: What about Summer School???

Are ESY Programs again hitting your radar? Is the clock ticking and you are reduced to doing what you have always done or scrambling to find answers? ESY- Extended School Year- often synonymous with “summer programs,” is here. Perhaps we can help to guide your planning and expand your ideas for effective, responsive programs.

Many models and programs exist across Vermont and the country. Most typically special educators and administrators seek solutions to solve dilemmas of distance, limited providers, diverse student needs, inclusionary ideals, and funding realities. Where to begin? Here is a review of our regulations, model options, and critical considerations:

Reviewing the “ins and outs” of ESY Rules and Regulations.. what do we have?

Regulations: Vermont Department of Education-

2360.2 Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

(h) each school district must ensure that Extended School Year Services (ESY) are available as necessary to provide FAPE consistent with Rule 2363.8(h) and at no cost to the parents of the child.

2363.8 Content of IEP

(1) ESY services shall be provided only if a child’s IEP team determines that the services are necessary for the provision of FAPE to the child because one or more of the following factors is evident:

- a. ESY is essential to permit the student an opportunity to reach reasonably set education goals;
- B. There has been a significant amount of regression over the past winter, spring and summer vacations and recoupment did not occur within a reasonable amount of time;
- c. The severity of the student’s disability presents a danger of substantial regression; or
- d. the student’s transitional goals require continued programming beyond the school year IEP.

(2) A school district or IEP team may not limit extended school year services to students with particular disabilities

(3) A school district shall not adopt a policy that limits the type, amount, or duration of ESY services for all children.

Federal IDEA Regulations require that programs are provided to a child with a disability beyond the normal school year of the public agency; in accordance with the child’s IEP; and at no cost to the parents of the child.

ESY programs are not-

- > mandated 12 month programs
- > day care or respite care services
- > a continuation of all IEP goals or stopgap for those who did not achieve IEP goals
- > a catch-up effort in relation to peers or due to medical or transitional life situations
- > providing education beyond that prescribed in IEP goals and objectives

How do you stand ? Check your SU-ESY readiness: (adapted from WI Dept. of Public Instruction-CESA #9)

1. ___ Our SU has its own ESY policies and procedures in place with procedures for determination of need, program planning, measuring student progress, documenting attainment of annual IEP goals, and informing parents of progress.
2. ___ Our IEP team has considered all relevant information relating to each student receiving a FAPE (not just one single criterion such as regression-recoupment) to determine necessity of ESY services.
3. ___ Decisions and services are based upon the student's individual needs (not dependent on existing programs or solely by the severity and/or category of disability).
4. ___ When a student requires ESY services, the IEP team identifies the specific IEP goals and objectives to be addressed in the ESY program.
5. ___ Programs emphasize the maintenance of the individual student's existing skills and development of emerging skills as indicated on the IEP. (Delivery methods will most likely vary from those provided during the regular school year).
6. ___ All constituents are aware that ESY services in one year do not guarantee services for the succeeding years, but instead are determined on an annual basis.
7. ___ ESY services are provided by qualified personnel.
8. ___ ESY services and programs are provided at no cost to the parents of the child.

In considering program designs and service delivery to match student needs, there are some specific questions you will want to answer:

Type and severity of disability- what is/are:

- a. degree of impairment?
- b. curriculum/IEP areas needing continuous attention?
- c. vocational/transitional needs?
- d. services which are essential as well as reasonable, integral to accessing the curriculum/education and/or to maintain learned skills?

Rate of Progress- what is the:

- a. degree of regression with interruption of services, detrimental to continued progress?
- b. recovery time from regression?
- c. length of time that student takes to learn a skill?
- d. critical time to work on emerging skills?

Alternate Resources- are there:

- a. planned or available community/home resources?
- b. parental ability to provide educational structure for student to maintain learned skills?

Ability to interact with non-disabled peers- does the lack of opportunity to interact with typical age-peers significantly interfere with maintenance of learned skills?

Behavioral / Physical: are there:

- a. behavioral or physical factors that negatively impact the student's ability to maintain learned skills?
- b. extended absences that impact ability to maintain learned skills?
- c. major life events that impact ability to maintain learned skills?
- d. significant behavioral challenges interfering with skill maintenance?

What options for program development do you have? Of these choices, what works for your students?
Are there others not listed?

Frequency of services	short days	tutoring hours	full days	Once weekly intensive blocks
Time frame	end of regular school year	end of summer program	beginning of subsequent year	continuous
Duration	1-3 weeks	4 → 6 wks	7→9 wks.	→continuous
Settings	School Multi-school Multi-district	home	recreational program camp work setting private summer school	residential
Delivery Style	group	individual tutoring	Inclusionary (with typical students)	with like-needs peers
Providers	regular educators (with/without para-educators)	special educators (with/without para-educators)	specialists (OT, PT, SLP, voc rehab, psychologists, therapists, counselors, other)	camp counselors, work trainers, other
Provider methods	Single discipline (only one service)	Multidisciplinary (specialized services offered singularly)	Trans- disciplinary (1 skilled provider offering multiple services with specialist consultation)	Interdisciplinary (dual/multiple services offered in team approach-simultaneous)

Here is one format to consider for your ESY Planning records if you are looking for something:
(JHL adapted from WI CESA #9)

Extended School Year Planning Sheet

Student Name _____	DOB _____	CA ____	Grade ____	School Year _____
School _____	District/SU _____	Case Manager _____		

Does the child require ESY services to receive a free and appropriate public education? __ Yes
__ No (explain)

If YES, identify which annual goals, including short term objectives will be addressed during ESY:

Specify all needed services:

I. Special Education	Frequency of services	Location	Duration/ time frame (beginning and end dates)
II. Related Services			
III. Supplementary aids & services- aids, services and other supports provided to or on behalf of student in regular education or other settings			
IV. Program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided			
V. Transportation needs	Who:	What:	When:

If you have additional questions on this topic, or other topics, please email Joan at joan.larsen@state.vt.us. Your feedback is invited and appreciated.

~ **Joan Holcombe Larsen, Special Education Consultant**